1440.

Membrane 25. — cont.

June 20.
Westminster.

King Edward I by letters patent granted to the then wardens of his exchanges of London and Canterbury, and to the workmen, moneymen and other ministers pertaining thereto, that while in office they should be quit of tallages and of service on juries etc., and that they should stand to right before such wardens except in pleas touching freehold or the crown; and King Edward II, ratifying the above, granted that they should be assessed by their wardens to any aids, to which they might consent to contribute, the wardens to be taxed as to such aids by the barons of the Exchequer. And afterwards King Edward III confirmed the above on 30 September in his sixteenth year, and acquitted them for their time of service of any tallages, aids, performances or contributions granted to him up to that date by the commonality of England, or thereafter to be granted. But the warden, workmen, moneymen and other such ministers now complain that, although their predecessors in the time of Edward III were discharged by judgment of the court of Exchequer from certain sums assessed on them, as appears of record; now, contrary to the above grants and confirmations, on pretence of a certain grant made to that king by the commonality of his realm, the barons of the Exchequer, moved by certain doubts whether the said grants suffice for the discharge of the present complainants in respect particularly to certain fifteenths and tenths granted to the present king and to his progenitors by the commonality of England, are endeavouring to charge the said complainants with divers such contributions; wherefore the king, desiring to deal graciously with them and to remove all doubts in the matter and considering their great labours in their offices and in order to incite them to attend the closer to their duties, has granted to them that they and their successors shall for the future be a body corporate with perpetual succession, capable, by the name of the Warden of the Exchanges of London and Canterbury, and the workmen, moneymen and other ministers pertaining thereto, of purchasing lands, rents and possessions and of pleading and and being impleaded, under the same style, in all pleas, suits, actions, plaints or demands in any courts of the king or his heirs, that they shall have a common seal for their business, and that none of them while in office shall be put on any assizes, juries, inquisitions, attainds, grand assizes or recognizances whatsoever, against his will, and that they shall stand to right before their own wardens in all pleas except pleas specially belonging to freehold or to the crown, and that none of them shall be made mayor, sheriff, escheator, constable, bailiff, collector, inquisitor, trier or assessor or other officer or minister of the king, and that they be hereby acquitted from all tallages, aids, prests, contributions, fifteenths, tenths, subsidies or quotas granted or to be granted by the commonality of England or otherwise to the king's predecessors or to him since the date of any of the above named patents, so long as they have been, or shall be, in office, and that the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer shall give them due allowance in that behalf.

By K.

June 27.
Westminster.

Protection with clause columns for one year for Ralph Hert alias Harte alias Harte, citizen of Lincoln, alias 'mercer,' alias 'chapman,' alias 'taverner,' alias of Lincoln, 'vynter,' going to Ireland to stay in the company of Leo, lord of Welles, lieutenant of that land. By bill of p.s.